

Proclamation 7109 of July 20, 1998**Captive Nations Week, 1998**

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Freedom, dignity, equality, and justice: these are words sacred to the American people. They define our lives as citizens of a democratic Nation, and they sum up our hopes for all the peoples of the world. More than 2 centuries ago, our founders articulated these fundamental human rights in the Declaration of Independence, proclaiming the truth of human dignity and the idea that governments derive their power and legitimacy from the consent of the people they serve. We reaffirmed these convictions with the ratification of our Constitution and the Bill of Rights. And 50 years ago, more than four dozen nations joined us in championing these rights and liberties across the globe by adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which the United Nations General Assembly passed unanimously in December of 1948.

Over the course of the last half-century, the Universal Declaration's call to "expand the circle of full human dignity to all people" has been a wellspring of inspiration. The Declaration has served as a framework for laws, constitutions, and other important efforts to safeguard basic liberties, as well as a yardstick for measuring progress. However, while democracy continues to grow and flourish around the world and millions enjoy fundamental human rights unencumbered by tyranny or restraint, the shadow of oppression still lingers.

The last decade has seen a remarkable transformation. The courage, strength, and determination of men and women struggling for liberty have changed the political landscape of the world. Democracy has blossomed and deepened its roots in many countries, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe and the nations of the former Soviet Union. But, the process of building democracy and strengthening civil society in these nations is far from complete. Moreover, there are countries in Europe and elsewhere where democracy is actively being undermined by authoritarian rule and disrespect for the rule of law. In these regions around the world, people are denied the right to worship freely, speak their thoughts openly, or live without fear of sudden arrest, arbitrary imprisonment, or brutal treatment. The rulers of these captive nations, in denying the tide of freedom rising across the globe, have positioned themselves on the wrong side of history.

This year marks the 40th observance of Captive Nations Week. For four decades these proclamations have served to express America's solidarity with people suffering under communist and other oppressive rule around the world. It is important that we continue to mark this annual observance as a reminder that building and nurturing democracy is an enduring struggle while there are still people in various parts of the world who are captives of tyranny.

The Congress, by Joint Resolution approved July 17, 1959 (73 Stat. 212), has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation designating the third week in July of each year as "Captive Nations Week."

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Title 3—The President

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim July 19 through July 25, 1998, as Captive Nations Week. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities and to rededicate ourselves to supporting the cause of freedom, human rights, and self-determination for all the peoples of the world.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of July, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7110 of July 24, 1998

National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In 1950, the thoughts of most Americans were far from war. With the recent end of World War II and economic recovery in full swing, the American people had resumed their everyday lives—going back to school, starting new jobs, and raising their families. But the tenor of the times changed suddenly and dramatically that summer, as communist North Korea crossed the 38th Parallel to invade its free neighbor to the south.

Once again, the world watched to see if the right of self-determination would prevail in the face of aggression, and once again Americans answered the call to serve. A United Nations force—spearheaded by U.S. air, sea, and ground troops and under a unified command headed by the United States—rushed to the support of South Korea. In the following 38 months, Inchon, the Chosin Reservoir, the Yalu River, and a hundred other locales indelibly etched into the memory of our Korean War veterans were added to the long list of places where Americans have fought and died for freedom. The fighting was brutal; the toll in injuries, lives lost, and those missing in action was heavy. But American forces, fighting side by side with South Koreans and our U.N. allies, halted communist aggression, preserved the Republic of Korea, and won a victory for democratic peoples everywhere.

Yet, for many years, these important achievements and the extraordinary courage and sacrifice of our forces in Korea received little recognition. For too long, overshadowed by the broad dimensions of World War II and the complexities of the Vietnam War, the Korean conflict seemed to be America's forgotten victory.

But in 1995, with the dedication of the Korean War Veterans Memorial in our Nation's capital, America finally paid fitting tribute to those brave Americans whose devotion to duty wrote a crucial chapter in freedom's history and whose valor and determination in battle laid the foundation for our Nation's ultimate triumph in the Cold War. With its haunting column of determined troops, the Memorial has the power to evoke strong memo-